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THE COLUMNA ROSTRATA OF C. DUILLIUS

BY TENNEY FRANK

A reference to recent grammars and histories shows that the famous inscription of the Columna Rostrata (Dessau *I.L.S.* 65) has again fallen into disrepute. It will be remembered that Ritschl and Mommsen pronounced it an antiquarian invention of the early empire. In 1890, however, Woelfflin by an able discussion¹ restored faith in it so that for a decade at least it was freely cited by historians and philologists. Woelfflin argued that so many ancient forms and phrases occurred in the inscription that it must in the main be regarded as a fairly faithful copy of a third-century original, and that the forms which were obviously of a later date could best be explained as due to the mistaken attempts of a restorer to invent archaisms in order to replace parts of the original that had been broken or rendered illegible by age. This view seems to me not impossible, though at present it has been generally abandoned for Mommsen's theory. Woelfflin's enduring contribution to the discussion lies in having pointed out the real archaic character of several phrases that up to his time were classed as examples of late and rhetorical verbiage. He noticed for instance that the use of *que* to the exclusion of *et* was characteristic of early documents, especially documents of an official character like the *lex Agraria*, the *lex Cornelia*, and the *Senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus*,² that the phrase *clases navales*³ was not redundant but a natural expression in the early day when *classis* meant "levy" whether of land or sea forces; that *praesente . . . dictatored* preserved in the participle a legitimate old meaning which was conserved in various other verbal forms of *praeesse*, "to have charge of"; that the phrase *in altod mare* could have been used only before *altum* became a substantive and a synonym of *mare*, a change

¹ *Sitz. Münch. Akad.*, 1890, pp. 293 ff.

² Note that *que* occurs three times in the four lines of the very old inscription of the Faliscan guild, Dessau *I.L.S.* 3083.

³ Paulus Festus, 225: *multitudo hominum quam navium*; also 56: *classis clipeata*; and 248: *classis procincta*.

that was taking place in the days of Plautus; and so on. Whoever will collect these remarkable archaisms—note the number of such excellent old forms as *exemet*, *inaltod*, *marid*, *olorom*, *triresmos*, *navebos*, *numei*, and *navaled*; consider the non-appearance of such forms as *quom*, *endo*, and *ai*, which an antiquarian would naturally have selected, and remember that we have no sure case of conscious archaizing of inscriptions—should be convinced that at least the substance of the inscription rests upon a genuine original.

The recent aversion to the inscription seems to be based chiefly upon Norden's assertion¹ that in comparison with the simple and jejune epitaphs and honorific inscriptions of the following two centuries the Duillian eulogy is fulsome and rhetorical; that in fact it is too self-conscious an effort to be attributed to the Romans before the day of their first literary attempts. It must be admitted that the inscription does not harmonize with Roman character of the third century as we know it. Perhaps, however, it is so un-Roman precisely because Rome had as yet no stylistic and formal literary models for Duillius to follow.

It was indeed in Sicily, among the most rhetorical of the Greeks and in their most verbose days, that Duillius achieved his fame. He campaigned between Agrigentum and Segesta before and after his temporary naval command, and doubtless, like other Roman generals in Sicily, spent some days during the rainy season in the hospitable companionship of the gracious Hiero at Syracuse. That Roman officers acquired in this way an acquaintance with many things besides the Greek drama which they at once transplanted to Rome is of course well known. And the man who, according to Cicero, found pleasure in a cortège of pipers and torchbearers could hardly have failed to note during his Sicilian campaigns the elaborate eulogies with which every petty Greek official was immortalized by his native city. In lieu of contemporary Sicilian examples, which have not survived, we may refer to the typical inscription which the Athenians had engraved in honor of Phaedrus some ten years before.² For services that Duillius might well have smiled at Phaedrus

¹ *De Stilone, Cosconio, Varrone*, 1895. Cf. F. D. Allen, *Early Latin*, p. 67, who questioned the inscription on stylistic grounds long before Norden.

² *Ditt. Syll.*³ No. 409.

received the honors of the gilded crown, a seat at the public tables and at public games, a bronze bust, and an inscription of a hundred periphrastic lines setting forth not only his own deeds but those of his father and grandfather as well. A brief extract will perhaps serve to illustrate the redundant and padded eulogies current in Duillius' time:

ἐπλευσεν ἐπὶ τῶν νεῶν ἃς ὁ δῆμος συμέπεμπεν εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν καὶ συνεδιεπολέμησεν τὸν πόλεμον τὸν ἐν Κύπρῳ καὶ ἔλαβεν Ἀγνώνα τὸν Τ[ήριον] καὶ τὰς ναῦς τὰς μετ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐπὶ Πραξιβούλου ἄρχοντος, Γλαυκέτου καθειληφότος Κύθνον καὶ καταγαγόντος ἐντεῦθεν τὰ πλοῖα, τὴν τε πόλιν ἔλαβεν καὶ αὐτὸν Γλαυκέτην καὶ τὰ πλοῖα τὰ μετ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ παρεσκεύασεν ἀσφάλειαν τοῖς πλέουσι τὴν θάλατταν, and so on to the dreary end.

Though this is of course not the model of the columnar inscription, it reveals the style of the honorific tributes which met the Roman in every public square in Sicily. The frequently criticized boast "*rem navebos primos c<eset>*" reminds one of *χειροτονηθεὶς πρῶτος* of line 45; the fulsome style of "*clasesque navales primos ornavet pa<ravetque> cumque eis navebos claseis Poenicas omnis*" is cast in the style of *Γλαυκέτου καθειληφότος Κύθνον καὶ καταγαγόντος ἐντεῦθεν τὰ πλοῖα τὴν τε πόλιν ἔλαβεν καὶ αὐτὸν Γλαυκέτην καὶ τὰ πλοῖα τὰ μετ' αὐτοῦ*, and "*enque eodem mac<istratud>*" when there was but one year of office is reminiscent of phrases like *ἐπὶ Νικίου μὲν ἄρχοντος στρατηγὸς ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου χειροτονηθεὶς ἐπὶ τὴν παρασκευὴν δις πάντων ὧμ προσῆκεν ἐπεμελήθη καλῶς* (*ibid.* ll. 21 ff.). Even the form which the honor took was probably suggested by Greek practice and imitated to the extent that Roman custom might permit, for as Phaedrus received an *εἰκόνα χαλκῇν ἐν ἀγοραῖ* (l. 81), an honorary inscription *ἐν στήλει λιθίνῃ παρὰ τὴν εἰκόνα* (l. 90), and the right of continuing in private life the use of magisterial insignia (ll. 72 ff.), so Duillius was accorded a statue in the forum, a public record of his deeds, and the continued use in private life of consular attendants *cum tibicine et funali*.¹

Other Romans may have thought Duillius vain, as Cicero implies, but the character of Greek eulogies could hardly have been unknown to them. Only a few years previously the Thurians had set up

¹ Pliny *N.H.*, xxxiv, 32.

statues in Rome to the tribune Sthennius, who had first urged the defense of Thurii against Pyrrhus, and to Fabricius, who had finally defeated Pyrrhus, and it is not likely that the inscriptions composed by them were written in the blunt Latin of that day.

That succeeding generations failed to follow the example of Duillius is not surprising. The long Punic wars succeeded in bringing the aristocracy back into power at Rome, where it remained for a century, and the Senate under oligarchic control always strove to reduce the consuls and the military heroes to modest behavior. The Romans meanwhile grew conscious of their own position in the world, and after that they fell less readily into the temptation of imitating the sentimental Greeks in ways that failed to harmonize with their own sense of what was proper and dignified. Even the two oldest Scipionic inscriptions with their *Honc oino* and *forma virtutei parisuma* seem laudatory in comparison with those of the following century; their authors apparently were still somewhat under the spell of the foreign manner.

It would seem then that the critics who reject the inscription have failed to sustain their case, and that Woelfflin's faith in the substance of it is fully justified. Even his explanation of the inconsistent forms as being due to an attempt to restore the illegible words with plausible if mistaken archaisms is conceivably acceptable. This explanation, however, is open to two possible objections: in the first place, we know of no other instance of conscious archaizing, and, secondly, it seems strange that this hypothetical antiquarian would have sanctioned such modern-looking forms as *aes*, *praeda*, *cum*, and *navales* if he really desired to give his restorations an antique appearance.

Since the inconsistent spellings all conform to the orthography in vogue about 150 B.C., it seems somewhat more probable to me that the columna, before its final restoration in the empire, had already been restored during the second century, possibly by some descendant of the hero. Restoration of ancestral monuments in more lasting form was frequently undertaken by proud descendants or public-spirited citizens, not only when the original had been destroyed by fire or other accident, but also when the original no longer satisfied the aesthetic demands of the later age. Pliny

happens to remark that the statues of the Sibyls were so restored by S. Pacuius and M. Messala;¹ the triumphal arch of Fabius Allobrogicus was restored by his grandson, the Basilica Aemilia was repeatedly restored and beautified by the later members of the Aemilian gens, and there are numerous other cases of the kind. The original Columna Rostrata of 260 B.C. was doubtless built of the rude and friable tufa then constantly in use. It can still be seen in the Servian wall near the railway station. This is a material wholly unsuitable for works of art. In the frequent changes within the Forum during the second century when new statues of travertine and marble were being erected the ugly monument may well have been replaced by one more befitting its surroundings. Possibly the original, like the statue of Aemilius (*tempestas disjecisset*, Livy xlii, 17), had been wrecked by storm, or by the boisterous election crowds, or by the mobs that frequently attended the games in the Forum; or it may have been ruined by fire. The devastating fire of 210 B.C. ruined almost everything between the carcer and the temple of Vesta,² and the columna apparently stood on or near the older rostra.³ These buildings were restored from time to time after the Punic war. The building of the novae tabernae in 192, or of Cato's basilica in 185, or of the Aemilian basilica in 179 may have caused readjustments in the placing of the monuments in the upper end of the Forum. In 158 there must have been a general rearrangement of honorific monuments since the censors of that year ordered the removal of all statues that had not been placed by official decree of the senate or people.⁴ A second redistribution of monuments near the rostra must have occurred in 145, when the popular assemblies were removed from the north to the south of the old rostra.

The hypothesis of a second century restoration, therefore, seems at least possible. It becomes indeed probable when the inscriptional forms, which have proved so troublesome in the light of other hypotheses, are examined.

¹ *N.H.* xxxiv, 22.

² Livy, xxvi, 27.

³ *In rostris vidimus*, Servius in *Georg.* iii, 29. The earlier writers who saw it say simply *in foro*: Pliny, *N.H.* xxxiv, 20; Quint. i, 7. The fragments were found near the arch of Severus, that is, near the new rostra.

⁴ Pliny, *N.H.* xxxiv, 30.

The forms *claseis* and *naveis* occur by the side of *clases* and *navales*, and it is usually supposed that these words contain a mixture of old, pseudoarchaic, and classical forms. Obviously the single consonant *s* suggests an early date; the diphthong *ei*, on the other hand, could not belong to 260 B.C., nor does it accord well with the first decades of our era, for spurious *ei* does not occur in accusative plural endings of vowel-stem nouns as late as the date of the final restoration of this inscription.¹ The forms *claseis* and *naveis* are, however, quite possible for the period about 150 B.C., that is, for the period of the posited restoration of this inscription. The single consonant persisted through most of the second century, as witness *suma*² of the Gracchan period. Our earliest inscriptional example of the spurious *ei*³ dates from 146 B.C., but inscriptions are so rare for the two decades preceding this date that we are not in a position to claim that it did not occur several years earlier. The fact that Turpilius could contract *flagitieis* into *flagitis*⁴ would seem to indicate that unaccented *ei* had become phonetically equivalent to *i* before the middle of the century.

The ending *es* of *clases* and *navales* are probably due to the imperial restorer or stonecutter, but we have no right to exclude a hypothesis that these forms may also date from the second-century restorer. This *es* of the accusative plural of vowel stems does not as a matter of fact appear in inscriptions till the end of the century,⁵ but there are two facts to consider with reference to it. Inscriptions dating from the middle of the century offer very few instances of just these forms from which to draw conclusions; and, secondly, since the *es* of vowel stems came into use through a confusion between vowel and consonant stems, it is highly probable that it appeared sporadically all through the second century B.C., since such confusion occurs in the other case forms then.⁶ If this is so, the single consonant of *clases* accords with the ending *es* and the whole word may possibly be attributed to the earlier restorer.

¹ Lommatzsch, *Archiv*, XV, 129.

² *C.I.L.*, I, 551.

³ *fasseis*, *C.I.L.* I, 542.

⁴ Sturtevant, *Contraction in Case Forms*, p. 6.

⁵ *omnes*, *C.I.L.* I, 577, 105 B.C.

⁶ See Stolz, pp. 204 and 211.

The form *consol* fits the second century and that alone. In 260 B.C. the word was probably written *cosol*, while *consul* was of course the form in the empire. The *ns* of *Cartaciniensis* must belong to the same writing as *consol*. *Poenicas* seems also to be the work of the earlier restorer. The word was doubtless spelled with *oi* in 260, while at the time of the imperial restorer *oe* had long since passed to *u*.

The uniform adoption of *ae* in *praesente*, *praedad*, and *aes* is usually attributed to the imperial restorer or stonecutter, but it may also be due to an earlier restorer since the diphthong *ae* occurs in inscriptions as early as the *S.C. de Bacch.*, 189 B.C.

With our hypothesis *macistr*<*a*>*tos* need not be taken as an invention of an imaginative imperial restorer. The dramatists of the second century often treated *u*-stem nouns as belonging to *o*-stems, and the confusion may be very old. *Navaled* and *dictatored* can now be accepted as correct third-century forms since the appearance of <*c*>*osoled*¹ has lent them respectability.² No real difficulty is presented by the fact that the former should end in *id*, for vowel and consonant stems were frequently confused in early Latin. According to Hodgman,³ Plautus alone presents a score of examples of such confusion in the ablative singular forms.

Finally, by positing an intermediate restoration and thus accounting for several hitherto inexplicable forms, we may accord fuller faith to such old words as *maximos* and *navebos*, which have been viewed with needless skepticism in the past. Brugmann's explanation of the variation between *u* and *i*⁴ leads one to expect *maximos* as older than *maxumos*. Whether both forms (in *i* and in *u*) occurred in the inscription of 260 B.C. we cannot say positively, but there is no sound reason for doubting that they did. I should be inclined to attribute <*ma*>*ximos* of line 3 to the original inscription, and <*max*>*umos* of line 9 to the original or to the second-century restoration. *Navebos* has also been rejected as an unsafe form, but Sommer⁵ is certainly right in accepting it. The ending is orthodox and is paralleled by *protrebibos* of *C.I.L.* IX, 4204, while the *e* is supported by the spelling *tempestatibus* in I, 32. The word evidently came down unchanged from the original inscription. *Exfociont* remains then the only

¹ *Notizie*, 1900, 499, and *C.I.L.* I, 2, No. 19.

² Brugmann, *K. Verg. Gr.*, 383.

³ *Class. Rev.*, XVI, 298.

⁴ *Grd.* I, p. 224.

⁵ P. 385.

unexplained word, and this may be a stonecutter's error induced by the occurrence of the unusual *o* of the ending.

If this hypothesis is correct, then, the main body of the inscription goes back to 260 B.C., while a restorer of about 150 B.C. supplied at illegible places the following forms in the orthography of his day: *ns* of *consol* and *Cartaciniensis*, *eis* *Poe* of l. 8, *ae* in l. 9, *eis* in l. 12, and possibly *es* in l. 7 and *ae* of ll. 14 and 17. Most of the forms that are certainly of the second century fall close together in the center of the present inscription at ll. 6–9, so that it seems not improbable that the original was spaced line for line exactly as the extant one is and that it was rather badly marred in one place before the first restoration.

The final restoration was of course made in the early empire. Perhaps the *curatores tabularum publicarum* appointed by Tiberius in the year 16 A.D. to restore *δημόσια γράμματα* (Dio 57, 16) had the work done, or Tiberius himself in the following year when he rebuilt the temple of Janus which Duillius had erected (Tac. *Ann.* II, 49) and which may have been mentioned in the last portion of our inscription. That the final restorer took some pains to follow his copy with care is proved by the fact that he corrected the erroneous *u* to *o* in *navebos*, and this fact should guard us from attributing many modernizations to him. The only changes that one is compelled to attribute to him are the use of *i-longa*, which is purely orthographic, and the apparently mistaken *o* of *exfociont*.

Regarding the form of the original monument only a word need be said. It is likely that the statue mentioned by the elogium of Duillius in the Augustan Forum¹ stood on top of the columna, as in the case of the old columnar statue of Minucius,² and the columna rostrata of Augustus.³ Since the authorities of the imperial time who had seen the new column do not mention the statue, we may assume that it had met with some accident or had been removed as an offense to the eye before this time. We are told that old tufa and terra-cotta statues were not in favor in Cato's day.

Of the inscription, fulsome as it is, something has apparently been lost, possibly as much as fifteen lines if the base—which we

¹ See Dessau, *I.L.S.* 55. It was discovered in 1890.

² Represented on coins; see Grueber, III, Pl. 26, 15.

³ See Grueber, III, Pl. 59, 18.

need not assume—had the normal proportions of statue bases, that is, length to width about three to two. The first line probably contained the name and title of the hero, as in the elogia of the Augustan Forum; and since Florus assumes (erroneously, of course) that Duillius had himself erected the column, the inscription may have failed to mention who had authorized the erection. If it was suggested by the Greek inscriptions of the day, the lost portion at the end probably mentioned the hero's benefactions, as for instance the gift of the temple of Janus¹ (Tac. *Ann.* II, 49), and gave a full list of the honors voted him by the senate and people,² not failing to note that his was the first naval triumph,³ and perhaps adding the fact that *huic permissum est, ut ab epulis domum cum tibicine et funali rediret*.⁴ Indeed the prominence given by the elogium and by so many authorities to these vain honors can be plausibly explained if we assume that this peculiar inscription, which followed the pompous Greek fashion of recording such trivialities,⁵ was their source. At any rate Silius Italicus, who gives a fairly full list of the traditional details, seems to have had the monument and the text of the inscription in mind (*Pun.* VI, 663–69). He is describing a fictitious panel of a temple door representing the deeds of Duillius:

Aequoreum juxta decus et navale trophaeum,
Rostra gerens nivea surgebat mole columna;
Exuvias Marti⁶ donumque Duilius, alto
Ante omnis mersa Poenorum classe, dicabat.
Cui, nocturnus honos, funalia clara sacerque
Post epulas tibicen adest; castosque penatis
Insignis laeti repetebat murmure cantus.

BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

¹ Cf. the inscription of Phaedrus cited above, especially l. 30.

² Cf. the inscription of Phaedrus, ll. 71–91.

³ Primus . . . navalem de Sicul. et classe Poenica egit, Acta Triumph.

⁴ Elogium; cf. Cic. *Cato* 44, Liv. *Epit.* 17, etc.

⁵ There is a possibility that the *epulae* mentioned were the *Epulae Jovis* to which Duillius was perhaps granted continued admittance on the analogy of the Greek *σίτησις ἐν πρυτανείῳ* and that after the inscription was marred the passage was incorrectly restored so as to combine the *epulae* with the attendant *cum tibicine* in this strange manner. If this is true the incorrect combination was made by the second-century restorer, since Cicero and the elogium agree in accepting it.

⁶ This refers to the temple of Janus, which Vergil, vii, 607, also associates for obvious reasons with Mars.